

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Anghy Idrovo, I'm 26 years old and I am undocumented and unafraid. I'm a resident of the city of Danbury, CT. I'm also the Co-Executive Director of CT Students for a Dream. **Today I stand in support of HB 6616: "An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status".**

Some of the struggles my community faces are; lack of secure and permanent jobs, wage theft, detention and deportation, lack of access to higher education, lack of access to healthcare and mental health resources/coverage, and lack of access to healthy environmental housing conditions. All of these struggles and barriers greatly impact the health of the undocumented community leaving us very vulnerable to illness. **Not being able to access public health insurance is denying us a human right and is telling about the state's beliefs on our human dignity.**

My family and I moved to the states 14 years ago. Growing up my two younger brothers and I were able to access limited yearly physicals until we turned 18 years old at a non-profit healthcare facility. Even though this help was tremendous to my parents it didn't cover all the health needs we had, such as eye, dental care or regular check-ups as needed. As a low-income family if we got sick we often recur to over the counter medicine and home remedies because of fear of being in debt from emergency rooms costs. After turning 18 neither my brothers and I have had yearly physicals. Nonetheless, my most pressing concern is about my parents' health. My mom is turning 52 this year and throughout this past year she has been losing her breath due to some undiagnosed issue with her throat. My mom is unwilling to go to the hospital because she feels that this could place a burden on our family, and make her kids indebted if it's something serious. Also she is scared that it could end her dream of buying a house by depleting her savings. My father is now 54 years old and only 3 years ago he was able to have access to healthcare coverage through his current employer. My father was the first one in our household to visit a primary care doctor and schedule a diabetes, cholesterol, pancreatitis and colon cancer check-ups to assure everything was in order. **This alone feels like a blessing but it shouldn't have to! It's heartbreaking to think that only when my father turned 51 years old he was able to access healthcare.** In addition I want to point out that my father's situation it's a very rare one and as well as an uncertain one since we can't predict for how long my father would continue to work for this company.

Inability to access health coverage today translates to an inability to access healthcare, which means that chronic health issues that could otherwise have been treated and managed develop into more serious, life-threatening conditions. A study by the National Immigration Law Center has shown that the uninsured people have worse health outcomes for chronic conditions and typically avoid seeking care until emergency intervention is needed.

My community deserves to live a healthy and unafraid life. This means having access to safe, accessible, and affordable healthcare and coverage that does not discriminate on the basis of status, including access to reproductive healthcare and culturally competent mental health care.

With more than 130,000 of undocumented immigrants in CT, this is a massive public health concern. I urge the committee to support and pass this legislation out of committee in its current form - to expand HUSKY access to age 26. Our work does not end with expanding access up to age 12 nor with expanding access up to age 18. And that work must continue this year by expanding HUSKY access up to age 26. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,
Anghy Idrovo
Danbury, CT

My father is now 54 years old and has been in the US for more than a decade and throughout all of these years he has never had a yearly physical check-up or a primary care doctor to recur to when his heart, hip, joint, migraines or dental issues have come his way. Nonetheless, after receiving health coverage 3 years ago from his employer my father was the first one in our household to visit a primary care doctor and schedule a diabetes, cholesterol, pancreatitis and colon cancer check-ups to assure everything was in order. This alone feels like a blessing but it shouldn't have to! It's heartbreaking to think that only three years ago when my father turned 51 years old he was being provided with healthcare. In addition I want to point out again that my father's situation it's a very **lucky**-rare one and as well as an uncertain one since we can't predict for how long my father would continue to work for this company.

My father's current job provides him with health insurance.
Since, everyone deserves medical attention and it's a human right.

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